

Volume 1, Issue 1 Landlords

Summer 2013

HOWARD COUNTY HOUSING Housing Choice Voucher Program Landlord Newsletter

"You were hired because you met expectations, you will be promoted if you can exceed them."

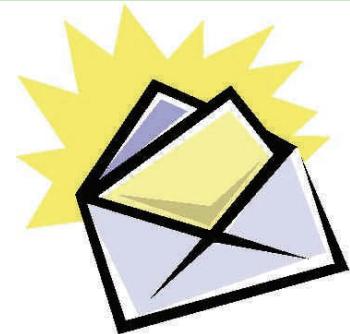
Saji Ijiyemi

KEEPING HCV LANDLORDS INFORMED

HOWARD COUNTY HOUSING re-launches the Landlord Newsletter

In an attempt to supply our landlords with updated changes, news, and information, Howard County Housing is excited to re-launch our Landlord Newsletter.

It is our mission to optimize communication with our partners for the purpose of expanding housing opportunities for program participants & facilitating positive working relationships between program staff, program participants, landlords and the community. It is HCH's desires to operate the Housing Choice Voucher Program with fiscal and relational integrity.



DON'T FORGET!

Although monthly rental payments are directly deposited into your account, we still need to have your current address on file. We mail 1099's & other correspondence via USPS.

Want to list your property? You don't have to visit or call our office to list a unit. Instead visit www.mdhousingsearch.org or call 1-877-428-8844 to advertise your available units for free. HCH refers all voucher holders to MDHousingSearch.org to locate available housing units.

Did you know that the service office has moved? Our new address is...

**9140 Guilford Road
Suite A
Columbia, MD
21046**

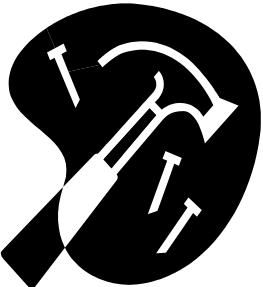
Annual Housing Fair

The annual Come Home to Howard County Housing Fair was Saturday, April 13 at Long Reach High School. Over 1000 people attended!

Don't miss out on next year's exciting event where you can connect directly with potential customers.

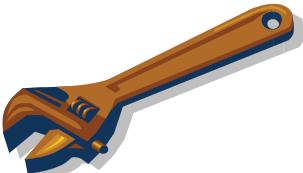
Prime locations go fast!

As always, book your booth early. Our 2012 and 2013 events were sell-outs! Be on the look-out for more information on our 2014 Housing Fair.



Complaint inspections must still be scheduled through Service Workers.

Howard County Housing's inspections are now completed by McCright & Associates.



To check the status of an inspection call McCright & Associates at (410) 864-6197

Inspections

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) is the HUD minimum inspection standard for tenant-based programs.

Newly leased units must pass a HQS inspection before a HAP Contract can be executed. Occupied units must pass a HQS inspection to continue the existing HAP Contract. Additional inspections can

be conducted as needed and at the request of the tenant and/or landlord.

Any areas of the home found in violation of HQS must be repaired timely (time period specified by HCH). Extensions to complete repair items are not required by HQS but can be granted in some cases. If an extension is granted,

HCH will allow the execution or continuance of the HAP Contract only if the unit meets all requirements and the modifications do not affect the livability of the unit.

HCH conducts all HQS inspections at least annually, as required by federal regulations.

Rent Increases

Before approving a rent increase, HCH must determine that the proposed rent is reasonable as compared to similar unassisted units.

This means that the rent for the unit is no more than the rent charged for a comparable unassisted unit in the same multi-family community or area. This determination

is incorporated into the HAP contract & is certified by the owner by acceptance of each housing assistance payment.

All rent increase requests must be submitted in writing. The approved increase will be effective the later of the anniversary date of the contract, or at least 60 days after the owner's request is received.

The decision to approve or deny the request is based on HUD guidelines, & the owner will be notified in writing of the decision.

This process does not affect the automatic renewal of the lease, does not require a new lease or HAP contract, or even contract amendment.

Landlords Benefits & Obligations

It is the policy of HCH to inform property owners about the benefits and requirements of participating as a landlord in the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The most obvious benefit is the monthly rent payment (full or partial). Another benefit is the pool

of program participants constantly searching for available units, which can reduce vacancy loss.

Some of the requirements include the Howard County rental license, the HQS inspection and property management that ad-

heres to local, State and Federal laws. For more information download our new Owner/Landlord handbook at www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments.aspx?ID=2292 or www.howardcountyhousing.com/landlords/

Program Addition

HCH is administering the County's new Homeless Stability Subsidy Program (HSSP), a component of the Coordinated System of Homeless Services. HSSP is housing of last resort for the most vulnerable Howard County residents & is subject to availability of funds, and any limitations imposed by the County Executive.

HSSP does not have a wait-list & is not open to the

general public. All program referrals & applicants are limited to households who are currently in residence at Bridges or Grassroots.

Families approved for HSSP assistance receive a Certificate instead of a Voucher as proof of subsidy; will present to a prospective landlord a Notice of Unit Availability instead of a Request for Tenancy Approval to trigger a unit

inspection; & will require landlords to sign a Tenancy Addendum instead of a HAP Contract if the unit passes a HQS inspection & the rent is approved as reasonable.

Program participants pay 30% of their adjusted gross income directly to landlord for rent.

To learn more about the program call Shanelle Smith at (410) 313-6349



We have extended office hours on Tuesday! You may walk-in on Tuesdays from 8am - 12pm & 4pm - 7pm.

Recertifications By Mail

HCH has implemented new processes to improve efficiency.

As of January 2013, HCH has started completing some annual recertifications by mail. Program participants are still required to update their household information (income, mem-

bers, etc.) annually, however some families will now have the opportunity to fulfill this requirement by mail, as opposed to an office appointment. In 2013 families with recertifications in January, March, May, July, September, & November are on the "by mail" schedule.

Families with recertifications in February, April, June, August, October & December are on the "office appointment" schedule. This information is important to you because changes in the annual recertification process & staffing may impact the inspection schedule for your property.

Utility Allowances changed effective May 1, 2013.

New Location

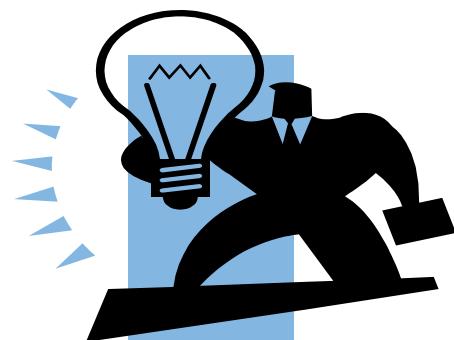
The HCH service office has moved to a new location & has expanded office hours.

Our new location offers dedicated meeting rooms & ample parking spaces.

Additionally, we are now open until 7pm on Tuesdays

& have designated Tuesday as our new walk-in (no appointment needed) day.

We are making changes to meet the needs of our customers & hope that you appreciate the added convenience.



Howard County Housing
6751 Columbia Gateway Drive
3rd floor

Postage

Address

Howard County Housing's mission is to provide safe, quality, affordable, and sustainable housing opportunities for low-and-moderate income families who live or work in Howard County and to assist them in moving toward economic independence. Howard County Housing will pursue this mission through open, efficient, innovative, and accountable processes.

Rental Housing Program Contact Information

For general information call (410) 313-6318 , Fax (410) 313-1466 or 1469 or E-mail housing@howardcountymd.gov

To contact program staff call: Robyn Bishop (410) 313-6327 Leslie Fox (410) 313-6347
Nicole Harris (410) 313-6369 Timi Lash (410) 313-6487
Wanda Phillips (410) 313-6367 Esther Spencer (410) 313-6498

To schedule or check the status of an inspection call McCright & Associates at (410) 864-6197

To list available units call (877) 428-8844 or visit www.mdhousingsearch.org

For License & Permit information call (410) 313-2455.

For Tax Assessment information call (410) 480-7940.

We're on the web! www.howardcountymd.gov or www.howardcountyhousing.com

Office Locations:

Administrative: 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, 3rd floor Columbia, MD 21046

Service: 9140-A Guilford Road Columbia, MD 21046

All changes must be submitted in writing to the service office.